

The Roman Road to Salvation: Overview

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[0 : 00] All right, please take out your Bibles to Romans chapter 1. Romans chapter 1. If you are new or visiting, welcome. But we got great news for you. You're coming right at the start of a whole new series. We're going to be moving through the book of Romans, the letter to Romans, the epistle of Romans, whichever way you prefer. But perhaps today, even better, you get to enjoy a lunch on us.

So enjoy the time of fellowship, I hope, and pray that you stay around, get to know us. We desire to know you. If you were here with us last week, I kind of give an introduction to the introduction of Romans. The book of Romans stands out quite differently than any of Paul's other letters in the New Testament. Church history tells us specifically that all, if not many, of the greatest revivals in church history happen because of the book of Romans, the teaching that is in there.

The early church fathers all talk about how significant the book of Romans is to the Christian life. From Augustine back in 300-something AD to Luther in 1500. Calvin. Tyndale, who translated the Bible into English. Even in Charles and John Wesley, who have written many of the hymns that we sing.

And if you are a student of theology, you're hearing me right. You're hearing a name now, Calvin and Wesley. And they were two different men on different sides of the spectrum of salvation. Which is interesting that this book was so life-giving to them. And we're going to get into that, just not today. But there's just so many aspects to this book which makes it great, as one author so eloquently tells us. It has been said that Romans will delight the greatest logician, captivate the mind of the consummate genius. It will bring tears to the humblest soul, refreshment to the simplest mind. It will knock you down and then it will lift you up.

[2 : 21] It will strip you naked and then it will clothe you with eternal elegance. As John Calvin wrote, when anyone gains a knowledge of this epistle, he or she has an entrance open to them, to all the most hidden treasures of Scripture.

If you were with me last week, I actually read you two and a half pages of questions that the book of Romans answers. And I'm just going to not repeat them all, but some of them.

What is the good news? What is the gospel? Is Jesus Christ really God? There's a lot of issues in this world. There's a lot of cults. There's a lot of people who run to false teachings. And every teacher, it's kind of interesting just listening to a podcast, and it was done by my former pastor, and he was asked, how do you know when you're able to partner with someone in ministry? And he simply brought it down to, it's do you have Jesus right? If you do not have Jesus right, there can be no, even though you may agree on every other aspect of Christianity, but if you can't get Jesus right, what the Bible has taught, you can have no affinity for one another. You can have no unity. The biggest question is, that many people ask, is how can God send people to hell? Is that not a question that we hear day in, day out? What is the standard by which God could condemn people? They're loving, they're kind. Why would God do such a thing? This is the big question that I had when I was in university, was how can a person who has never heard the gospel be held spiritually responsible?

[4 : 16] That perplexed me. How could that do it? How can I know that I'm a sinner? How can I, a sinner, be forgiven?

What role does the Holy Spirit have in my life? And even ask the question of somewhat what I was praying today is, why is there suffering? Will this world ever be different? What's this thing called election and predestination? Can I lose my salvation? So many things are found in this book. This morning, as we dig deeper into this incredible text, there's two things that I want to explain to you. And I'm going to tell you right now, I'm heading out into uncharted waters. I'm going to be preaching

and teaching in a way that I've never done before. My seminary may withdraw every credential they've given me.

But who knows, right? So as you're going to see, you have a handout in your folder. Did everyone grab a bulletin? No shame in putting your hand up if you didn't, but you'll want one. So I know Mihai would love to run around and hand out some of these. Jerry over here at the front. It's going to be really important as we get into this. But there's two sections. And one of the things that I want to do for you today, and one of my goals of this incredible series, is I want to teach you to understand God's Word as I do. Like how to study it. When people say, how do you study it? We know how to read it.

But how are we able to pull out some of these truths that exist within this text? So what I'm doing is, while we're going through the book of Romans, I'm going to teach you the quote-unquote tricks of the trade. I'm going to teach you the tools that I've been given and that I've developed over the years that help me learn and understand God's Word. It's interesting, just thought out today, I'll just think of the people who taught me how to God's Word. And I was kind of moved to the thought of when I was in grade 10, 11, and 12 at camp. There was a man who was a camp counselor and eventually we counseled together. But when I was in grade 10, he was the one, I still have that picture in my head of being on my knees and him teaching me how to read God's Word. How to understand it. How to read the introduction. Why is that important, right? And, you know, that man is forever emboldened in my mind as someone who's had a great impact in my life. And when I got to university, this is where I started to grow in my ways that I wanted to study God's Word. I wanted to be able to pull out the meat and thank the Lord. I was with a great Bible study leader who is a pastor in downtown Toronto.

And the other guy who was with me in that Bible study was with my friend Leo that you guys met here a couple of weeks ago preaching. He became a preacher through that time as well because he helped us pull the truth. Anyhow, my biggest issue, and you might be different than me, is I get lost in details. I do get lost in details. You ask my wife to say, if she could say, you know, BK, put those socks away. I can put those socks away. But as soon as she starts saying, put those socks, those shirts, and those pants away, whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa, there's too many things coming at me, right? Like all of a sudden you start adding things and I just get confused in the process. And of course, I'm kidding in that simple analogy. But when there's more words, more ideas, I start to, quote unquote, lose the forest through the trees. You remember? You're familiar with that expression.

[8 : 30] The details overwhelm me and I don't know what's going on. That's why when I read books, I appreciate the books. I'm that guy when I'm reading a fictional book and they tell you the title of the chapter at the top of the book because it helps me remind me where I am. Because you're reading the story, what is going on here? Because I've read so much. So what I've decided to do for you is I wanted to create, and the first thing I wanted to do for you, anytime I begin a book, I go over an outline of the entire book of the Bible. And I want to understand the flow and what is going to happen in the text. Now, if you guys notice, the other half of the paper, and I think there's an overhead, but it's okay. You guys have it in front of you. This is called block diagramming. I block diagram. And it's not going to make sense today because I don't think we're going to get to this text. But every single sermon, you're going to get one of these. And this is what I do with my text to help me understand the flow of the passage. But I always have to begin with an outline. Because then I understand how this fits in an outline. And I'm hoping, maybe next Sunday or the Sunday before, you will say, BK, you're a genius. You help me figure it out. I've been lost. Or some of you guys, hey dummy, I've been doing this my whole life. Why did it take you so long to get there? But anyway, I will be gracious to either way. But anyway, we're going to look at the outline that has been included in the text. Because

I want you to have a greater understanding of the outline, the overview of the book of Romans. So feel free. Do we have that one? Did it show up? Did it work? Yeah. So we're going to keep that up here.

So as you can see, there is 16 chapters in the book of Romans. We have an introduction. That is chapter 1, 1 to 17. Then the book is primarily based around a theme that we find that David read for us in Romans 1, 16 and 19. And it's important to understand that this is the theme section.

Paul writes, For I am not ashamed of the gospel. For it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For it is the righteousness of God is revealed

from faith for faith. As it is written, the righteous shall live by faith. This is a huge statement. The righteous will live by faith. What does it mean to be righteous? What does that word even mean to be righteous? And if you're with me last week, Luther believed the word righteous to mean that God was so righteous, he could never accept us in his presence because we were so unrighteous. You're with me? Like it consumed him. And he would work harder and harder and harder to prove this righteous so he could say he had this righteousness, but he could never do it. So that's what this first section is all about. Who are the righteous? Then it's, who isn't the righteous? Then it answers the question, if I'm not righteous, how do I get righteous? If it tells me that the righteous will live by faith, I want to be one of those righteous.

Paul is going to unfold it for us. Who's the righteous? Who isn't the righteous? And how do we become righteous? This is essentially what this book, this letter, this epistle is all about.

[12:52] After this introduction, we have the first 11 chapters. Romans is kind of identified into two, as you see. You can leave that up for the whole time, Shane. We're going to, we're going to blow lumens.

So you have the introduction, the conclusion, and there's really two sections. There's the doctrinal concerns, and there's kind of the, the theoretical concerns. And what I mean by doctrine is just the practical teachings of the truth that are found. So remember, the theme is always righteous, righteousness. So if you look in the first section of the doctrinal concerns, there's four sections there.

The first section, Paul most generously outlines man's problem. He basically takes three chapters to tell us why we have a problem. And whether you do or do not realize it yet, you do have a problem.

And it doesn't matter if you are a Jew. It doesn't matter if you are a Gentile. It is actually, in fact, a universal problem. This problem infects every nation, every people group, every language, every background, whether you're slave, free, man, woman, adult, child, you have a problem. You know what that problem is? You have no righteousness. Zip, zero, nada, nothing. There is nothing you have, nothing that you can do that you can offer to God as righteousness. Nothing. Zip, zero. There's not even a little bit. It's not like God's 99% and I do that one. It is zero, bunk, nothing. Why? There's a problem. There's a problem. And it's called sin. Now, I know when I say that, that's an old school world, right? If you go to some of the modern classes today on how to pastor, don't say the word sin. Don't say it. People don't want to know there's sin out there like they don't know, right?

[15:08] But there is. There is sin. Now, sin, the way that we use this word, it's an old school understanding. Back in the day when people actually shot bow and arrows, they'd have a target and they'd shoot at the target. And if they got a bullseye, they got a bullseye. But if they missed, the guy monitoring the target would go, sin, sin, sin. He was missing the target. He was missing perfection. But it's so much more than that. Is it just a matter of being imperfect? Sometimes the idea of sin is we're born into it. So it's not something that you did and now you're infected. You've been infected since the very beginning. Believe it or not, your parents sinned. And I know you all say, hey, I know that, man. You don't have to tell me twice. But what if I told you your grandparents sinned? What, Grammy? Grammy never sinned.

Guess what? Grammy sinned. Grampy sinned. Papa, mama, they sinned too, right? And guess what? Their parents sinned. And it goes all the way back to the very beginning to Adam and Eve. So what does it mean to be a sinner? Paul's going to explain to us as we get into it means you're a rebel. Not only are you a rebel, you do rebellious things against God. You're not rebelling against your parents.

You're not rebelling against your school. You're not rebelling against your boss. You're rebelling against God. And because of that rebellious, you are now separated, not just from God, but his perfect plan. There was a way that Adam and Eve were going, which was perfection in the Garden of Eden. And once that sin came in, it switched everything. Genesis 1 makes it so very clear that man and woman, Adam and Eve were created with a wonderful, incredible purpose.

But they rebelled. Not only did they rebel against their creator, but they rebelled against their purpose. They rebelled against who God taught them to be and what they were to do.

[17:32] And then all of a sudden this sin entered into this world. And this sin has these great consequences. We are lost, enslaved, trapped. We're bound by sin and we're bound in sin.

Another word, not only are we rebellious, but sin makes us, and I'm going to use a very politically incorrect word here, forgive me, makes us stupid. Sin makes us stupid. Makes us foolish is the

biblical technical name. But it's true. It makes us stupid. We're foolish. It means we can't even, even if we were given every opportunity to choose the right thing, no matter what we do, we always choose the wrong thing. Because the wrong thing is what we really desire. That tells us about the bent of our heart.

So, and even when you're given an opportunity, you've done this one thing and you know it's wrong, you made it way out, guess what? Day number two, you do the same thing again because you're locked in. It's part of your DNA. I remember one time, I'm with a friend, I don't know if I shared the story, he wanted to buy a new car. I took the whole weekend off and we went shopping all over Toronto, all the big auto malls and he's trying, you know, his wife got a job and we're going to get a great car. We had the top 10 list and we're driving and making observations. And then he shows up on Monday and no offense to Volkswagen Jettas, but it didn't even make our top 10. And I'm like, what? And he goes, well, I always get Volkswagen. Right? It's just, why did you waste my entire weekend checking out all these cars?

That's kind of that foolishness. Not that it's foolishness buying a Volkswagen. Did I tell you about the wonderful Volkswagen that I sold my son? No, I'm not even going to get into that. Anyway, another word, there's sin, rebellious, there's foolishness. Then there's this another word called lost. You're so lost, I give you a map and say, get here to there. You don't even know how to use that map. I can give you a map. I can give you a compass. I can give you a radar. You're still not going to know how to read that map. Because it's almost like you've got the map of Texas in front of you, but you're trying to get to Jerusalem. It just doesn't even go. Right? But you're sitting there, you're studying map. I can figure it out. Another word for sin or consequences of sin is brokenness.

Brokenness. What this means is that we cannot for the life of us fix it.

[20 : 50] No matter how much we try, I'll be honest with you. My wife will tell me, go fix the car.

I'll get all the tools. I'll look at all the YouTube videos. And I'll have to ask Jordan to do it. I can't fix it. I can't fix it. I just don't understand. Can't do it. It's not in me. I'm broken. I do not understand. I can't think in 3D. Just go around, do this. It's just not there.

And why we can't fix this is that sin makes us incapable. It makes us incapable. It makes us unable to remedy the problem. Even if, like I said, you're given all the tools, all the know-how, you still cannot do it. I can give you all the laws. That's what God did. He gave you over 500 laws. If you follow this, you will be fine. You would have think Israel would have gone clear sailing, right? And we'd be all celebrating in Jerusalem. Something happened.

So if you are here today and you're like, no way, BK, I know it. I can do it. I'm smart enough. I'm wise enough. I'm good enough. I come from the right family. You know what I hear? Blah, blah, blah, blah.

So if you're unsure about whether or not you have any type of righteousness, Paul is going to dissipate any of those ideas in this first section. And the way you should feel when you get to Romans 3.20 is absolutely lost. You're right. I am broken. I am lost. I am foolish.

[22 : 32] I am, quote unquote, stupid. I am incapable. I am broken. And that's what he says. Well, there's some good news. God has a solution. And that's what happens between Romans 3.21 and Romans 5.21. He outlines the solution. That man's only solution is found in who? Jesus Christ.

In fact, it's interesting. Paul often calls him Christ Jesus to put emphasis on the messiahship of Christ. It is Christ the Messiah, the long-awaited savior that the Jews were always waiting for, is there to save you. This is the only way for man to be made righteous. How does this happen? Well, these are the questions that will be answered in the second section. But get down to the punchline. It means to take on the righteousness of Jesus. So that's going to be the second section we're going to learn about. The third section, we're going to learn about our calling. Romans 6 to Romans 8.

Some would say that this is the heart of the letter. What does it mean to be holy? What does it mean to be made righteous? What does it mean to be holy now that there's Jews and now that there's Gentiles?

Like before when I was a Jew, the reason I knew I was a good Jew is I was circumcised on the eighth day as a man. Now I'm a Gentile. I don't get circumcised. Can I still be right within God? These are some of the questions that Paul is going to answer. And we're going to get into in a little bit why those questions exist and why they're so important. We're going to learn the mechanics, so to speak, of holiness.

[24 : 23] Like one, how does grace overpower sin? Even the idea that I just talked about when we're talking about these three churches coming together for worship, people are hurt, relationships are damaged.

It's how does grace of God unite us to be one and pleasing to God? That's what this section is going to answer for us. What do we do with this thing called the law? There's these things called the Ten Commandments. Are they for today or are they just for the Jews? What? 1400 years, 14 BC, 23, 3600 years ago. Does that still matter today? Because some of those laws are kind of weird, right? You know, you read them and it doesn't make sense. But what do we do with them? What does life in the spirit mean? Here's a big one. Why is it that I really want to do good, but I don't? Anybody been there?

Had that thought? I'm going to, you know what, God, I'm going to lean on your grace here as I walk into this sin. I'm going to walk into this disobedience. You might blame it on a matter of other things. Wow, it's part of my DNA. I really want it. God can redeem it. God will have to give me a pass. Why? Why is it even there? Why am I even struggling with this? Am I not righteous? I just learned that I was corrupt in the first section. I learned in the second section that I'm now righteous, but I still struggle with this thing called sin in my life. I still gossip. I still get angry. I still get frustrated. Even though I delight in the law of God, why do I still break it?

And in the fourth section, Paul starts to talk more a little bit about Israel. And he talks about and he introduces us to his plan. What does this all mean for Israel, for God's chosen people?

Is it good to be a Jew or bad to be a Jew? What's interesting, Paul, the author, will refer back to the Old Testament in this book, letter, epistle, more than any other one. And we're going to spend some time understanding what that Old Testament is. Why is it this way? Why is there such a plan for Israel? It's going to relate to the Old Testament. Before I go any further, let me tell you, in case you don't understand the Old Testament, can I fill you in in about 10 minutes what Old Testament's really all about? I can sum it up. I know, 39 books. I'm going to sum them up for you right here, right? Book of Genesis begins. It's the beginning. It means the beginning. It tells us how God created all of this, how he intended us to live. Genesis 3, serpent comes, tempts Eve, shares with Adam.

[27 : 48] We are descended into sin. But we learned that we could have a perfect life with God and on earth, but we rebel and we've always followed our parents in rebellion. We are, quote unquote, cursed with sin. But God doesn't leave man there. He gives them a promise. There will be redemption, will be coming. So what's interesting is, as Adam and Eve create more people, people grow, and there's millions of people, but God is not actively involved with people. And the people become so deplorable, so evil in their actions, God basically says, I am sad that I made man.

Like, what did I do? These people are a mess. So what he does is he sends a flood, but he saves a family. And as we know, he builds an ark, and he saves some of the animals. And the people go out again.

But he makes a promise. He says, hey, I'm never going to flood the world again to demonstrate my judgment against man. But God does something very different this time around. In Genesis 12, before he kind of figured, like, Adam and Eve and those guys, they lived a long time. They lived over 900 years. So you would have known someone who would have known Adam who said, yeah, I talked with God. Like, there was no question that God existed. You still knew it. But they ignored him. He had nothing to do with it. They didn't have a reminder. Even Dave was talking about that. It's such great wisdom. We need to go to God's Word to be reminded about what he says because we forget. So God, knowing that, you know what he does? He pulls out this man named Abraham. Says, Abraham, come out. Come out of your land and be my people. And I'm going to give you a land. And he makes this covenant, a promise. I will always keep you. I will always love you. And you will be my people. And what I'm going to do with you is I'm going to show the world what loving God that God is through these people. How they are going to be a wonderful representative of God in this world. So then we have Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. And then God removes them from Israel and sends them to Egypt. And it's actually, if you're thinking geographically, it's this way. But anyway, and they're there for 400 years. They're slaves. And then God raises up Moses. Now those Israelites aren't just a family tribe anymore. They're in the millions. They're a people group. And God is going to send them back to Israel, the land that he promised to Abraham.

[30 : 45] And he raises this man named Moses. But he makes this covenant with Moses. And he says, listen, I'm going to give you the law. I'm going to give you all these things. If you live by these

things and you follow after me, I will bless you. If you do not follow after these things, you will essentially be cursed. I will withdraw my blessing. So the rest of the Old Testament is essentially Israel trying to follow God in the flesh as opposed to the Spirit.

We learn about how there's two things. You know what God hates more than just about anything else? He hates the abandonment of the widow and the abandonment of the orphan. If you practice that injustice, that is anger towards God. And the other thing they did is they followed after other gods. So every place they'd go, someone would come into the land. Hey, we'll worship that god too. And God had said, you shall only be my god, right? Ten commandment. Number one, you shall have no other gods. So there's hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of years.

Israel kind of getting right. Then they'd go back and they'd get right again. They'd get back. And finally, God makes another covenant. And it's with a man named David, who's a king, who has a man after his own heart. And in this covenant, he says, David, there will come a time where your descendant will sit on the throne eternally. The throne of David. Someone from your line will rule forever. And we get that, obviously, the promise of Jesus that will come.

But God at that point knew the conditional covenant. So you have the Abrahamic covenant, which is a covenant, a promise that God makes. It's not conditional on anything Israel does.

You then have the Mosaic covenant. That's the covenant, the promise that he makes with Moses, which is conditional. If you do this, I do this. That falls apart. And then you have the Davidic covenant, which God says, hey, listen, I got it covered. It's all on me. So what happens, what's really interesting is Israel descends into their sin, that God sends the Assyrians in about 700 BC, wipes out the northern tribes. And then finally in 587, 586, Babylon finally comes and destroys the temple and destroys their home. And Israel is taken into exile. But something marvelous happens. [33 : 34] Even in the destruction, even though God all is lost, there's a prophet, and this prophet's name is Jeremiah. And God gives him a word, thus says the Lord, and he's to share it with these people.

It's Jeremiah 31. It says, behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord. I know you're depressed. I know you're hurt. You're living in Persia. You do not have a temple. You have no kings anymore. You've been decimated with the sin that has happened. And he says, behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah.

Not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on that day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt. Remember that conditional covenant. That's the Mosaic covenant. It's not going to be like that. My covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the Lord. That's why the word harlot and adultery is used throughout the Old Testament to describe how Israel acted towards God. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord. He goes, I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And no longer shall each teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, know the Lord, for they shall all know me. For the least of them to the greatest, declares the Lord. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.

Yay! Then all of a sudden the Jews, who were the apple of God's eyes for hundreds, if not thousands of years, are lost.

[35 : 32] And in the second part, we come to this book of Romans. It's all about the practical. What does it mean? Now that I know all these truths that God has taught me, up to chapter 11, how do I think?

What does it mind to have a new mind? And then the rest, how do I live with you? How do I forgive? How do I live with government? Right? All these questions, Paul starts to answer. How do we live in this society that is broken, lost, corrupt?

How do we live as believers in this society? And then he concludes this letter, like many other letters, thanking and talking about all the wonderful people that he meets along the way.

That, my friends, is essentially the book of Romans. And that's what we are going to be doing over the next, Brent Smith estimated we'd be here for 10 years, I hope not.

Anyway, now before I get to the text itself, I need to give you context. These are some of the things that you need to understand.

[36 : 46] Not only do you need to understand the overview, but the context. First of all, and I mentioned this last week, it's important to know Rome is very different than the other, a lot of the

other churches.

We don't know who founded it, or we kind of do, but it wasn't an apostle. It wasn't Paul who went to Rome. We don't know if it's Peter, but I believe it was Peter's teaching that led to the church at Rome.

At the beginning of your Bibles, and turn with me to Acts chapter 1. Acts chapter 1. If you remember, after Jesus, it's actually going to be Acts chapter 2, forgive me, but if you want to take some time, you can read a little bit about the background.

You know, and the sad reality is, I'm going to be struggling to read it, because I didn't bring my glasses. But Acts chapter 2 talks about Jesus has just ascended to heaven, and now he's pouring out his Holy Spirit on God's people, right?

It says, when the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place, and suddenly they came from heaven, a sound like a rushing wind, and it filled the entire house. Verse 5.

[37 : 58] Now there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men, from every nation under heaven. And at the sound, the multitude came together, and they were bewildered, because each one was hearing them speak in his own language.

And they were amazed and astonished, saying, not are those who are speaking Galileans. How is it that we hear each of this in his own native language? And then he names a whole bunch of them. And I'll turn down to, oh man, chapter 2, and it's verse 20, I believe, but I can't read it. 2.10. It says, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt, and parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes.

Proselytes were Gentiles that followed the Jewish faith. You with me? So a lot of these people at that time, they then spread out, and guess where these people landed?

They land in Rome. Now Rome is the center of the world. Rome is the ruling land, the ruling empire. But not only that, it is believed that in Rome, there was at least a minimum 10% Jews.

[39 : 12] Some people would say even greater amount of numbers. So there was a very significant amount of Jews living in Rome. And the way Jewish brothers and sisters would share the gospel with one another, where did they find the Jews?

On Sabbath. The synagogues, right? They'd go into the synagogues, and they would teach. So it started off in Rome growing. That's how the church began to grow.

But the Jewish, the Christian faith, had a very distinct Jewish flavor to it. Because what's interesting, when you read the book of Romans, people are asking the question, is this a book to a Jew, or is this a book to Gentiles?

And it's both. And the reality is, why is it both? So what's interesting, it started growing. And then in AD 49, the Roman emperor Claudius, and this is great, and we have secular sources that talk about this, the Christians start fighting with the Jews, or rather the Jews start fighting with the Christians. Now, Roman doesn't get that there's this distinct group that's going on there. So he gets, because, and we know, if you've read the book of Acts, Paul goes in, he starts teaching, and then they all want to kill him.

[40 : 33] Right? Like, how dare you? You're teaching this Jesus Christ. You're introducing another God. We were told to follow only one God. We followed all those other gods, and look what happened to us.

Right? We're nobodies now. We used to be one of the greatest kingdoms. So Paul's trying to say, no, no, no, no, no. It's the same God. It's the future, but they don't want to listen. It causes chaos. So what does Emperor Claudius does? Get out of here. You're all out of here. You're Jews out. So he kicks them all out of Rome. It's interesting. In Acts 18, we hear this.

It says, after this, Paul left Athens, and he went to Corinth. And he found a Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla.

So if you don't know Aquila and Priscilla, they're going to show up in the story of Acts. They were a couple that were God-fearing Jews who knew the Old Testament. Paul recognized them.

[41 : 37] Turns out they're tent makers like him. He begins this conversation with them. So he starts learning about the church that is growing, but he gets an opportunity to share the gospel with Aquila and Priscilla, and guess what?

They become saved, and they become missionaries themselves. But it indicates to us, guess what? Jews are out of there. What's going to happen? Gentiles are left in Rome.

So now, for a good 10, 15 years, that Jewish influence is gone. So the Gentiles, the barbarians, the non-Jews, carry on the church of Rome.

So those questions start to happen. Because someone's saved, do I really need to get circumcised? Let's be honest here, guys. If you're over eight days old, hey, if you want to become a Christian faith, you've got to be circumcised.

There's no one showing up. Right? That don't sell on any street that I know of. Hey, let me tell you about Jews. You want to be made right? Ah, here we go. You've got to get circumcised. Next to that.

[42 : 46] So, they had to start dealing with those questions. But as the Jews were coming from Rome, what does Paul understand? There's some problems with an understanding of the gospel.

So Paul in Rome, or in Corinth, at the end, we believe it's between 55 AD or 58 AD. I've read the same author, say different dates.

They're like, it's within a year of that. Paul sits down and writes this incredible letter. And that's why there's depthness to it.

This is why it addresses Jewish issues. It addresses Gentile issues. It deals with mankind issues. And it's long. And Paul meant for this letter to be shared amongst the empire.

And just think how that happens. God brought a level of uncomfortability to these Jews that were in Rome.

[43 : 53] And we even have the testimony of Priscilla and Aquila. Let's be honest, they probably had a great business. They were tent makers. Why do we want to leave Rome?

Rome's the empire. Money's to be made here. And all of a sudden, they're being told to leave. What do you think their prayer is? Lord, take this away. This is hardship.

I can't deal with this. I don't want this. Who's prayed that prayer when we've come into hardship? Right? Sometimes God purposely moves us from a place of comfort to, like, listen, we've got two families here that come from a whole other continent.

And I'm sure it wasn't your first choice. We pray that there's blessings here for you guys. That you encounter the love of Jesus and ways in a whole other community.

That'd be hard. Some of you guys have come for a better economic life, but sometimes that's how God works.

[45 : 01] So here's Aquila and Priscilla just on the road who knows what they carry on their backs or they got a couple of donkeys bringing their stuff and they meet this guy Paul.

And Paul teaches them and they love it. And they say, I want to go on a missionary journey too. And they become missionaries and they become very influential in the early church as they go to those other synagogues teaching the gospel of Jesus Christ.

That's where I'm going to leave you today. With that background. So next Sunday we're going to get into this, the block diagramming, and I'm going to show you how it works, why it works, and why it's really easy to do.

But you're going to see all my points clear as day and it's going to allow you to ask yourself questions. So my encouragement is take this home with you. Read it. Try to understand it. It's got all the little helps along the side what Paul is doing. And then one day, maybe one day, you will be before a group of people teaching people about the book of Romans, 1 Timothy, the gospels, in another setting setting where God could use you to perhaps reach out to another Priscilla and Aquila who are God-fears but do not know the Lord but you can be the one to show them that everlasting truth.

[46 : 35] Amen? I know, praise the Lord, we're not really smelling the food just yet because usually we would be at this point. But you're going to ask the worship team to come up, we'll sing, and then after I will give a benediction and we'll say thanks for the food and the blessings to our fellowship.

Thank you.